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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ADDIS ABABA 000048

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/FO, AF/SPG, AF/RSA, AF/E.

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/06/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SU](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: AU PSC GREEN LIGHT FOR UN TRANSITION OF AMIS  
UNCERTAIN

REF: STATE 1351

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. VICKI HUDDLESTON. REASON: 1.4 (B)  
AND (D)

11. (C) Summary: The African Union (AU) Commission has not undertaken extensive discussions either internally or with member states on the issue of an "exit strategy" for AMIS, Peace and Security Commissioner Amb. Said Djinnit told DCM, British Ambassador, Dutch Ambassador and Canadian Charge January 5. Djinnit stated his preference for a political agreement to be in place before considering AMIS re-hatting, but conceded that a political settlement is not a prerequisite for UN takeover. The AU seeks more clarity on partner commitment to fund AMIS throughout a transition period and is keen for assurance that the cash gap will also be closed. The AU Commission will do its "utmost" to seek either a concrete Peace and Security Council (PSC) decision on AMIS future or PSC development of a mechanism to discuss AMIS future when it meets January 12, Djinnit noted. Nevertheless, PSC members will have the ultimate say. While Djinnit was less confident that the PSC would give a green light for UN transition planning, AU Deputy Chairperson Mazimhaka told Charge January 6 that PSC authorization of UN planning seems a logical outcome of the January 12 session. In a separate meeting, the Cameroon Chair of the PSC told DCM that he expects more clarity on AMIS future as a result of the January 12 PSC. Without predicting PSC outcome, he indicated satisfaction that the USG is promoting a UN transition and noted that a UN mission would have to be more robust than AMIS. End summary.

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GETTING FRANK WITH THE AU ON AMIS  
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12. (C) DCM, British Ambassador Dewar, Dutch Ambassador Hennekens and Canadian Charge approached Djinnit jointly on January 5 to convey a united position on the importance of a January 12 PSC decision authorizing AMIS transition to a UN mission. DCM presented reftel points verbatim. An EC delegation representative attended as an observer.

13. (C) The partners told Djinnit that the AU Commission can capitalize on AMIS success to date by promoting a PSC decision calling for a transition to the UN. The UNSC needs an AU green light in order to authorize the UN to begin planning. DCM noted that the U.S. wants to use its UN Security Council Presidency in February to request planning for re-hatting AMIS, so timing is crucial. Partners noted that partner funding does have its limits so the AU and its member states should not make a PSC decision based on the

assumption that partner funding for AMIS will continue.

¶4. (C) Still, the USG and UK are committed to ensuring that AMIS funding continues during a transition period. DCM said that the U.S. intends to work to ensure a continued African presence in Darfur through advocating re-hatting African troops and considering the possibility of an African Force Commander for the UN mission. Partners asked Djinnit to ensure the AU Commission's report to the PSC stresses the importance of deciding on a way forward for AMIS. Partners also assured Djinnit of continued commitment to improve African peacekeeping capability through training and equipping African troops.

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EXIT STRATEGY UNCLEAR, AU SEEKS REASSURANCE ON FUNDING  
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¶5. (C) Djinnit said that the AU and partners should take joint credit for AMIS success. Emphasizing the importance of AMIS for AU credibility, Djinnit noted that Darfur was the first opportunity to test the new Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the AU's strategic objective of "non-indifference." AMIS was also an opportunity to improve AU peace support capability.

¶6. (C) According to Djinnit, the AU has not had much opportunity to discuss AMIS exit strategy either with the PSC or with member states. Still, "it was clear from the beginning that there must be an exit", he said. Djinnit noted that the AU does not have the capability or financial security to engage in a long-term mission and that the UN is the only logical successor for AMIS. There is, though, no agreement on transition timing.

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¶7. (C) Djinnit said that the AU's fundamental assumption was that transition should be linked to a political settlement. He conceded that, while securing a political agreement would make it easier for him to promote transition, a political settlement is not necessarily a precursor to UN takeover.

¶8. (C) Djinnit thanked the USG for assurances that AMIS funding would continue during a transition period, but commented that the AU needs not only sustainment of current funding but also additional funding to meet cash shortfalls. The EU Peace Facility will only take AMIS to April 2006, he reminded partners. Djinnit noted that he had consistently told partners for many months that AMIS need more financial predictability. Director of the Chairperson's Bureau Diallo also requested clarification on partner intent to fund AMIS through a transition period that may last nine months.

¶9. (C) Djinnit stated that the issue of funding is still "very sensitive." He commented that strategic partnerships between the AU and international community cannot be based on financial dependency. He welcomed U.S. and other partner offers to enhance AMIS capacity and said the AU is open to external technical assistance provided the AU retains command and control.

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AU COMMISSION WANTS CLARITY ON AMIS FUTURE  
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¶10. (C) The AU Commission is not in a position to predict the PSC outcome, Djinnit noted. He assured partners that the AU wants to go to the Khartoum Summit with a clear sense of AMIS' future. Djinnit said that the Commission would do its "utmost" to seek either a concrete PSC decision on AMIS future or a mechanism for discussing the way forward for AMIS.

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PSC CHAIR THOUGHTS  
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¶11. (C) In a separate meeting, Cameroon Ambassador Jean Hilaire Mbea Mbea (PSC Chair for January) told DCM, Dutch Ambassador and British Poloff that he is "relieved" to hear that the U.S. "has changed its position" on the issue of transition (Note: DCM raised reftel points). Cameroon was under the impression that the USG was reluctant to promote UN takeover of AMIS, he said. Mbea said that the PSC may want a shorter transition period for UN takeover -- three months instead of nine. He emphasized that a UN mission should not simply take over from AMIS, but instead should be more robust. Mbea was not convinced that the UN is prepared to undertake a more robust mission. Mbea noted that he cannot predict the PSC outcome, but stated his expectation that the January 12 PSC will provide more clarity on the issue of AMIS future. He did indicate, though, that the PSC may simply extend AMIS for three months while the details of a transition are worked out with the UN. DCM urged the Cameroon Ambassador to consider clear language on transition during the January 12 PSC meeting so the USG can use its February Security Council Presidency to pursue the issue of re-hatting AMIS. British Poloff noted that handing AMIS responsibility to the UN will also free the AU to pursue efforts in other regions such as the Great Lakes.

¶12. (C) Note: Canadian Charge approached Lesotho and Kenya PSC Ambassadors January 5. According to Canadian Charge, Lesotho does not expect that the PSC will make a firm decision on AMIS future on January 12. The Kenyan Ambassador expressed preference for continued AMIS presence in Darfur. End note.

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COMMENT  
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¶13. (C) Post does not believe AU member states have a clear understanding of timelines involved for transition, funding constraints and partner committment to continued support to improve African peacekeeping capabilities. This is all the more true since the AU Commission has not actively engaged member states on the issue of exit strategy and realities on the ground. Post will continue to approach local PSC Ambassadors, but high-level approaches to PSC and other key capitals are also vital.

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